

THE *Grey Wolf* HOWL

VOLUME I, ISSUE 3

JANUARY 15, 2007



INSIDE:

'Sabers' Make Presence Known
Chaplain Brings Beach to 'Grey Wolf'
IPs Graduate from Academy
Lone Star State of Mind
'First Team' Medics Train IPs
Santa Visits 'Blacksmith Families'
Radio Station Opens Doors
What's In A Name?

Pg. 3
Pg. 4
Pg. 8
Pg. 9
Pg. 10
Pg. 10
Pg. 11
Pg. 12

CDR/CSM Corner	Pg. 2
Soldier on the FOB	Pg. 5
Chaplain's Corner	Pg. 5
Grey Wolf in Action	Pg. 6-7
FOB Photos	Pg. 12

Commander's Column

By Col. David W. Sutherland
3BCT, 1CD Commander



Greywolf!

First, I would like to begin this message by wishing all the members of the Greywolf team and their loved ones a Happy New Year. We have been working long hours for the past three months, but our families remain in our hearts and on our minds throughout the long days in Diyala, Iraq.

We have started our Rest and Relaxation program. Some of our Soldiers have taken advantage of the R&R program to be at home during the Holidays. This is a well-deserved break. I hope everyone uses it to recharge and reconnect while applying the same level of maturity that I see daily with regard to risk mitigation in combat. Everyone's support sustains us while we are away. Enjoy your time off, and come back safely with a renewed vigor.

This is a very important New Year. As Lt. Gen. Odierno stated during his visit, this is a critical year for both the Iraqis and the Coalition Forces. Our continuing transition into a coaching and mentoring position with the 5th Iraqi Army Division will take a

great leap forward when the 5th IA moves under the control of the Iraqi Government. Our job is to ensure the 5th IA is able to conduct operations independently, sustain their forces, maintain their equipment, and successfully provide security for the people of Iraq. This is no easy task, but our effort at platoon, company, and battalion level will ensure they are able to transition smoothly.

The Greywolf Brigade will continue to apply a balance of lethal and non-lethal force to assist the Iraqi People. The Soldier's in the BCT may not always be able to see the immediate effects of our actions. However, across the Government, the Economy, the Security, and the Transitioning of forces they are collectively and holistically accomplishing my intent. This is due to the skills, knowledge, and attributes of our Troopers and Leaders.

Greywolf, thank you for your discipline, confidence, and competence towards one another, the Iraqi People, and our mission. As I've said on numerous occasions, there is greatness in our formation. When opportunity knocks, the leaders and Soldier's in this Brigade have the vision and perspective to take advantage of this opening. I know the families at home are as proud of our Soldiers as our Soldiers are of their families.

I'll see you all on the high ground.

Grey Wolf 6

'Hooah' Corner

By Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Felt
3BCT, 1CD Command Sgt. Maj.



I would like to take a moment and say happy New Year to all the Grey Wolves out there.

Good, now that that's done...get back to work!!!!

Seriously, I hope everyone had as good a holiday as one can have while thousands of miles away from loved ones. I know that there are other places I would rather have been, but if I can't be with my wife in a hammock, sipping margaritas, smoking a big fat cigar somewhere in the beautiful Caribbean, looking forward to an evening of fine food, dancing and..... then there's no other place I'd rather be than with my Army family, doing our nations work.

That being said, I have a few issues I would like to address at this time in our deployment. With the holidays over, leaves beginning and the doldrums setting in, we are susceptible to complacency and professional apathy. It would be unfortunate to have someone killed or injured because we let the enemy take advantage of our lack of attention to detail or we let a safety discipline violation get the better of us. Tactically, we must remain on our toes at all times.

We now have some experience under our belts in this area of operations during

this OIF rotation. We can't let that fool us into developing bad habits or taking shortcuts on our TTPs. We can't set patterns that are predictable to the enemy. We must out think him, out maneuver him and take away his initiative. You can't do that if you are complacent about your business. Remember, the enemy only wants to kill you, that's all. Don't give him the chance.

As far as accidents go, a vast majority of accidents occur when a known safety discipline is violated. When someone forgets his seatbelt, takes a bend too fast, uses only two points of contact or doesn't utilize full personnel protection equipment, they are an accident waiting to happen. Take this away from the equation and follow the SOPs that are established for your protection. They may not be the most comfortable rules to live by, but they don't exist for your comfort, they exist for your welfare. I ask you to take care of yourself, take care of your buddy and watch out for Murphy.

Keep your head in the game and remain focused on the mission. If you find yourself in a rut, ask someone to pull you out. No one accomplishes this mission by him or herself. We are all part of the team, and a good team it is. Grey Wolves are making a difference; in Diyala and at home. Your efforts are contributing to the security of our nation.

The world faces a threat today unlike any we have known before; a global network of terrorists that have their own agenda and it doesn't include you! If we

do not face this enemy, life as we know it at home will not be the same. I have said it many times before, the average American doesn't even realize we are at war; it hasn't changed his daily life at all. That is usually a criticism of John Q. Public, but in this case it is a compliment to you; the American serviceman and woman. It proves that your efforts are important, and you are making difference. If it weren't for the few, the many would suffer.

Lastly, I would like to wish everyone going on leave a good trip. Please be careful while you're gone. Don't abandon your principles of discipline in terms of safety or personnel accountability. Just because your on leave doesn't mean you're not a Soldier, you represent yourself, your family and the Army. Do it proudly, with dignity and respect. Have a good time, drink one for me, but be careful. I want you to be safe, for your own sake, as well as your unit's sake. Everyone is important to the accomplishment of the mission. We need you back in one piece to help us finish the job. Then we can all return home together. Again, I thank you for all you do. Having visited and talked with many of you, I understand a little better how the big green machine works. Your contributions to its success are appreciated. I am inspired and motivated by you everyday, you're the reason I still serve.

Live the legend,
Grey Wolf 9

'Saber' Battalion Makes Presence Known

Sgt. Armando Monroig
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MUQDADIYAH, Iraq -- When there's a new sheriff in town, he wants to make himself known. The 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron did just that when they launched their first squadron-sized operation of the deployment Nov. 19 in Muqdadiyah.

Soldiers rolled out for an early morning operation that included blocking a supply route used by insurgents, route clearing, speaking with key leaders at the Joint Coordination Cell, and searching for weapons caches.

All in a days work for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division unit out of Fort Hood, Texas. Their tour is just getting started but when their year is complete, they will have had an impact by helping bring law and order to the streets of Muqdadiyah.

The operation began with the Iraqi Army blocking off a portion of the area of operations to attempt to corral any insurgents who might be in the vicinity, said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Thompson, squadron command sergeant major, a Middleburg, Ohio, native.

Coalition Soldiers then pushed forward in the direction of the blockade and cleared the road of any improvised explosive devices they found along the way, said Thompson.

Then, two blocking positions were set up, one on each of the two bridges most used by anti-Iraqi forces, said Thompson.

The bridges were blocked to keep insurgents from bringing any vehicle borne improvised explosive devices into Muqdadiyah, said Thompson.

"We cleared that route and started to



Photo by Sgt. Armando Monroig, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A Bradley fighting vehicle smashes through a wall in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, as part of a massive operation involving Iraqi Security Forces and Soldiers from the 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron. The wall was used by insurgents as a place to hide vehicle borne improvised explosive devices and as a hiding place for AIF who lobbed grenades to oncoming vehicles.

knock down a wall that was on one side of the route. There were four kilometers of that wall they use to initiate ambushes, IEDs, and throw grenades over," said Thompson.

Following the wall demolition, the cavalrymen cleared a suspected Al-Qaeda training camp. Three caches and two kidnapped victims were found inside the camp. No enemy forces were found.

"Some good came out of it," said Thompson of the operation. "We retrieved some weapons and two people who otherwise would have lost their lives."

In addition, four suspected insurgents were captured.

Despite the limited success of the operation, Thompson said improvements need to be made on the Iraqi forces side, particularly the Iraqi Police.

"The (Iraqi Army) around here has been trained pretty well. They operate very well, have fairly good leadership and are very aggressive. They do a really good job," Thompson said. "The (Iraqi Police) are not quite where they need to be."

Thompson said operations like this are good training for the Iraqi police. He said they will try to integrate them in more of these operations to con-

tinue to assist in training them and their new QRF team.

Thompson said an operation of this magnitude makes a statement to the enemy.

"We're telling them we're going to go exactly where we want to go, when we want to go there," Thompson said. "If they try to interfere with us, they're going to suffer."

Accomplishing their mission here will be a challenging task, said Thompson, but compared to the last time he was in Iraq, the locals are friendlier and want the coalition forces to be here.

"They, both Sunni and Shia, want us here. They just want all this to end. They're doing what they can do to help us bring it to an end," added Thompson. "And we owe them that."

Spc. Bryan Hartung, a Virginia Beach, Va. Native, who is a combat medic assigned to Troop A, 6-9 ARS, has seen first-hand the struggles of helping the Iraqi people establish a stable government. This is his second deployment.

"We're just trying to get the Iraqi Security Forces up and running and at the same time keep the city safe," said Hartung.

Hartung said his unit's efforts are effective as they are keeping the streets safe for the locals and for his fellow Soldiers. He and his battle buddies are out clearing the streets of IEDs daily.

"The ultimate goal is to get the Iraqi government and country on its feet, get IP and IA working so we can eventually leave."



Photo by Sgt. Armando Monroig, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron Soldier pulls security during a foot patrol in the downtown area of Muqdadiyah, Iraq.

Chaplain Brings the Beach to 'Grey Wolf' Soldiers

By Spc. Ryan Stroud
3rd BCT Public Affairs

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- While deployed to Iraq in support for Operation Iraq Freedom 06-08, the last thing many 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers would expect to see are images of the beach, surfing or relaxing by the water. While there are palm trees in Iraq, the beach is no where to be found.

For Chaplain (Maj.) Douglas Fenton, the "Grey Wolf" Brigade chaplain, his goal was to bring the beach to the Soldiers.

Fenton, who has personally fixed up his office to look more like a surf shop than a chaplain's office, wanted a place for the Soldiers to come to relax and feel at home while they are so far away from their families.

"I was trying to do something that was really outside the box for the Soldiers," said Fenton. "I knew the Soldiers that come in here would be under a lot of stress and wanted to give them a place that looked different than Iraq."

Fenton has covered his walls with surf signs, flags and surfboards in hopes of raising Soldier morale.

"I was in Laguna, Calif., with my wife and we walked past a surf shop," said Fenton. "Inside the shop was a sign that said, 'Pray for Surf,' and the second I saw that sign, I knew this is what I wanted the theme for my office [in Iraq]."

Fenton and his wife quickly got started picking up items for

him to pack for Iraq.

"My wife and I were later in a Hollister store, shopping for my son's birthday," said Fenton. "The stores are always decorated with surfboards and California flags, and I thought to myself, I can do better than that."

"We took a California flag and put a surfboard under the bear so I would have a surfing bear," he continued. "And the surfboard in this room was hanging over the bed of my oldest son. He was nice enough to let me bring it here with me."

Along with surfboard coffee tables and Sponge Bob Square Pants stuffed toys, Fenton also has a life guard chair, statues and a quilt of old T-shirts his wife made for his journey. He hopes that when Soldiers have a problem and come to see him, things like this will help them to open-up and talk.

"When Soldiers come in here, sometimes they are not ready to talk about what's bothering them, so you need something that will help relax them," he said.

"My goal is if somebody sits down, there will be something they can talk about and then we can ease into what we need to talk about," Fenton added.

Fenton said he knew from the start his office would be a success while packing up for his units deployment.

"I knew this was a good idea when we were loading up our storage containers before we came over," said Fenton.

"Everyone was loading military equipment up and here I come with a surfboard. Just seeing their faces then, I said to myself, 'this is going to totally work.'"

It seems Fenton's plans for making people feel better is already working.

A Soldier, whose son was having a problem with his father's deployment to Iraq, came to talk to Fenton. The Soldier, when he saw Sponge Bob Square Pants, knew his son was a fan and got an idea to help ease his son's worries.

"[The Soldier] came over here, sat in a chair that had a surfboard next to it, a marlin above the chair and a tiki god next to it, and had his picture taken with my Sponge Bob to send back to his son," said Fenton.

"Now his son is not so worried about him," he added.

Though the office is to help cheer Soldiers up, it is also to help Fenton out when he is feeling down.

"Whether it was snow skiing, tennis or other activities, everyone had to leave something behind. This is also to remind me of what I love and what waits for me once we return [home from Iraq]."

Though some may say he's



Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

Chaplain (Maj.) Douglas Fenton, holds the surfboard his son let him bring to Iraq with him in hopes to raise Soldiers' morale while deployed in support of OIF 06-08.

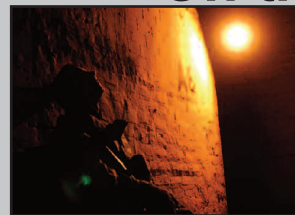
crazy for bring a surfboard to Iraq, Fenton said he hopes that he can make a difference and possibly make things easier in the Soldiers lives while deployed, and that's what's most important to him.

"I just hope it cheers everybody up, even if it is only for a moment," he said.

Useful Iraqi Phrases

What is your name?
shis-mek?

On the cover ...



A 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 1st Cavalry Division Soldier relaxes before heading out on a big mission to Muqdadiyah, Iraq.

Photo by Sgt. Armando Monroig, 5th MPAD

3rd BCT Commander
Col. David Sutherland

3rd BCT PAO

Maj. Raul Marquez

raul.marquezhernandez@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO NCOIC/Editor

Sgt. Serena Hayden

serena.hayden@us.army.mil

3rd BCT PAO Staff Writers

Spc. Ryan Stroud, Pfc. Ben Fox

The Grey Wolf Howl is published in the interest of the Soldiers, families and friends of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. Contents of *The Grey Wolf Howl* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 1st Cavalry Division. All editorial content of *The Grey Wolf Howl* is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs Office.



Chaplain's Corner

As I walk around FOB Warhorse, I am encouraged by what I see. It seems that everywhere I look I see greatness on the best of days and the worst of days. As a chaplain, I get summoned to the hospital many times and I'm amazed every time I see the staff work on Soldiers, Iraqi Nationals, and even wounded enemy soldiers. They put forth the same effort and energy, and I feel that I'm standing in the midst of greatness.

As I listen to the stories of the wounded, one thing is recurrent; they all want to get back into the fight. I'm amazed at their zeal and professionalism; in a word, greatness. As I visit the places the troops work, I see excellence. The heavy equipment operators are always working and doing a fine job. The civilians who come here to support us do an extraordinary job. They do the cooking, general FOB maintenance, generator repairs and the cleaning of the bathrooms, showers and port-a-potties. Over all, I would have to say that the enemy's attempts to demoralize our troops, thwart our efforts, or weaken our resolve have utterly failed. I'm not saying that we all wouldn't rather be home with family and friends, but you would never know it when we get the call to duty and guys are jumping in their vehicles to recover equipment, assist in a fight, or support the Iraqi forces in a mission. It's just awesome to see. Greatness!

Even in sullen times, like when we lose a Soldier, even then, in their pain and grief they march on, they do their jobs. And when they can they cry their tears, share their stories and then drive on. Greatness!

My commander occasionally reminds us that we are the .05 percenters. That's the calculated ratio of the population of the United States that serves to protect and defend her. We are a peculiar breed of people from every race, every culture, every color, every religion and every place in America and we are very proud to be here. Even when it rains here, like today, it feels down right miserable. The mud cakes up on your boots within two steps and your feet gain five pounds each and yet I see people moving about to go to the gym, MWR, the theatre and just to visit people. Looks are definitely deceiving. For though they look miserable, if you stop and talk you will find that they are doing exceptionally well, in spite of the circumstances.

So don't always believe what you hear in the news, or from someone who hasn't been here. I'm here and I see greatness, from the chapel to the guard towers, from the gates to the ranges, it's everywhere. Greatness. And we take such strength from you at home. —I just saw a card from home it says: "Our hands become instruments of grace—not just tools in the hands of God...but God's very hands. You are those hands, fingers emailing us, hands mailing packages, arms embracing our loved ones for us. The amount of strength and stability we glean from those that we have left behind can not be measured. Families that have leant their sons, daughters, husbands and wives to answer the call of God and Country are the finest display of greatness and nobility. Those who endure the struggles and hardships of single parenthood and loneliness without complaining are equally displaying greatness.

Chaplain (Capt.) Eric Bey
1-12 CAB, 3BCT Chaplain

Custom Made Band rocks the troops



Photo by Sgt. Serena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs

"Grey Wolf" Soldiers enjoy a performance by the Custom Made Band in the Wood Memorial Dining Facility at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, Dec. 19.

Soldier on the FOB

"What Holiday traditions have you continued here in Iraq?"

Pfc. Tony Biernacki
HHT, 6-9 CAV



"Singing Christmas Carols [over the radio], eating lots of junk food, enjoying a big meal, and sending presents to family and friends."

Pfc. Lucas J. Sweeney
B Troop, 6-9 CAV



"I saved all the mail I was sent and opened it on Christmas day."

Sgt. 1st Class Lealofi Faiai
HHT, 6-9 CAV



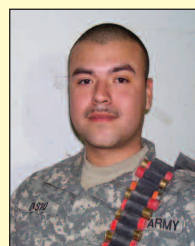
"I wrote my family Christmas cards."

Pfc. John Hyland
HHT, 6-9 CAV

"I saved stockings my kids sent me to open Christmas morning. I also attended the Christmas Eve service at the Chapel."



Spc. Miguel Castro
A Troop, 6-9 CAV



"Buying Christmas gifts for friends and family."

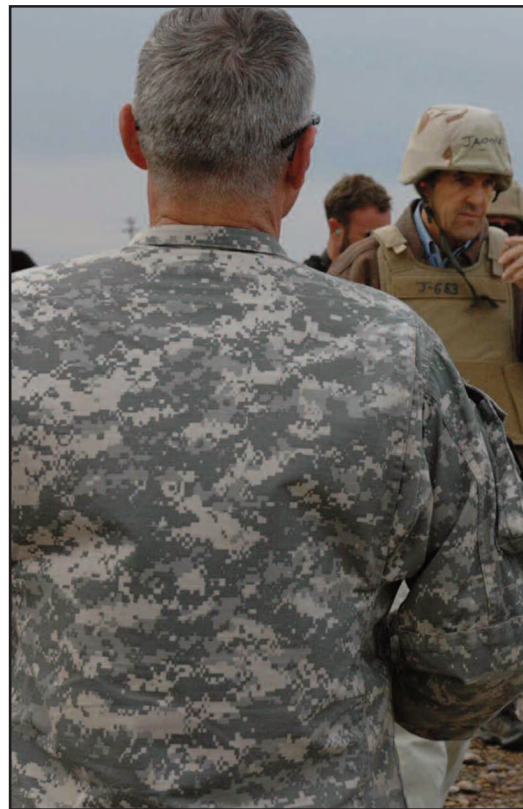
By 1st Lt. Thomas J. Radabaugh, HHT, 6-9 CAV

GREY WOLF



Photo by Spc. Elisha Dawkins, 92nd Combat Camera

Pfc. Chris Anderson keeps an eye on the street from the second level of an abandoned home in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. Anderson and his fellow soldiers from Apache Troop, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Hood, Texas, and the 5th Iraqi Army Division are conducting joint dismounted patrols in the region to clear abandoned buildings and to suppress insurgent activity.



Sen. John Kerry is greeted by Col. David S. (far left), the commander and command s Division, at a helipad on Forward Operati



F IN ACTION



Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

Sutherland (far right) and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Felt, command sergeant major of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, walk into the sunset at Camp Warhorse in Baqubah, Iraq.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Samantha Stryker, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Photo by Sgt. Serena Hayden, 3BCT Public Affairs

Above, Staff Sgt. Jeff Young, a member of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division personal security detachment, prepares for a mission in the Diyala province. Young, the truck commander, and other PSD Soldiers, are responsible for the security of the brigade's commander and command sergeant major.

Left, a Soldier from 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, attached to 3BCT, walks into the sunset after an air assault mission in Turki Village, Iraq, an area near Balad Ruz.

First Class Graduates from New IP Training Academy

By Maj. Raul E. Marquez
3rd BCT Public Affairs

BAQUBAH, Iraq — Approximately 125 Iraqi Police officers assigned to various units in the Baqubah area, graduated from the first Iraqi Police Training Academy in Baqubah, conducted under the guidance of coalition forces from Task Force Blue and the International Police Liaison Officers, Dec 24.

“Officers from the Emergency Ready Forces, the Quick Reaction Forces, and Baqubah Iraqi Police participated in this two-week long training academy,” said Maj. John J. Herrman, Task Force Blue operations officer and a native of La Crosse, Kan. “Those officers are now ready to assume their duties as the rule of law enforcers here in Baqubah.”

The training for the IP officers was provided by their own Iraqi instructors and Special Weapons and Tactics team, otherwise known as SWAT, members, said Herrman.

“Instructors from the Tactical Iraqi Police Academy provided the classroom portion of the training; the range cadre taught weapons handling and maintenance, and SWAT members assisted with the hands-on

portion of the training,” said Herrman. “We provided oversight through the IPLOs and our Military Police.”

Even though the training was only two weeks, this training included classes on democratic policing, the Iraqi Constitution, rule of law, weapons safety, proper firing techniques for both AK-47 and pistols, shoot and maneuver, hands-on defensive techniques, dismounted patrolling as a member of a team, mounted patrols, react to improvised explosive devices, first aid, and entering and clearing a building, said Herrman.

He also stated that during this training, the IPs received their new uniforms and equipment that signifies they are real police officers.

“The training academy will continue providing classes every day through the end of January, and quarterly after that,” Herrman said. “They expect to have at least 25 percent of the Baqubah police force trained by the end of the third training cycle.”

“For most police officers here, this was their first formal training,” he continued. “They have been out on the streets mixing it up for years, never



Photo by Maj. John J. Herrman, Task Force Blue Operations Officer

An Iraqi Police officer receives his IP patch from Maj. Mason W. Crow, Task Force Blue executive officer, during the graduation ceremony, Dec. 24. TF Blue is responsible for training and equipping the Iraqi Police.

fully understanding the proper way to use a weapon, the rule of law, the constitution they are to support, or how to conduct themselves as a policeman. We hope that the course turns out a more ethically and tactically proficient policeman, able to better enforce the laws of Diyala, and to serve and protect all Iraqis.”

“The Iraqi Policemen are some of the bravest people we have ever met,” said an American Police Advisor supporting Task Force Blue. “They risk their lives, and those of their families, on a daily basis trying

to bring law and order to the streets of their cities. The training we are providing is designed to save some of those lives and extract a high price from the terrorists and insurgents who choose to attack these officers.”

Maj. Gen. Ghassan Adnan Awad Al-Bawi, the Diyala Chief of Police, attended the ceremony, and provided the graduates a motivational speech on the importance of training, regardless of their years of service as police officers.

The ceremony concluded with each IP receiving their uniform patch.



'Grey Wolf' Retention Team

3 BCT Senior Counselor
3rd BSTB
1st-12th CAV

215th BSB

3rd-8th CAV
6th-9th CAV

2nd-82nd FA

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Helmes
Staff Sgt. Luis Carter
Staff Sgt. Jason Folmar
Staff Sgt. Alegray Hamer
Staff Sgt. Annamaria Conklin
Staff Sgt. Margaret Smothers
Staff Sgt. Don Jewell
Staff Sgt. Richard Erickson
Staff Sgt. Keston Dyer
Staff Sgt. Daniel Beltran

Texas Soldiers Live in a Lone Star State of Mind

By Amanda Kim Stairrett
Killeen Daily Herald

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- "Home" conjures a lot of feelings during the holiday season and perhaps no one feels that more than Fort Hood soldiers deployed to Iraq.

The 1st Cavalry Division started deploying its forces in August and finished at the beginning of November.

It is a bittersweet time for the Fort Hood community because while the First Team troops were departing, it meant that the 4th Infantry Division was coming home – a sweet, long-awaited present for thousands of families. The last plane of 4th Infantry soldiers touched down at Robert Gray Army Airfield the night of Dec. 18.

Others units across Fort Hood – III Corps, the 13th Sustainment Command, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade, 36th Engineer Brigade – also have deployed troops.

For the Fort Hood soldiers overseas, their deployment kicks off with the holiday season and "home" is represented by the few things they could take with them: photos, mementos and memories.

This is 1st Lt. Alphie Sachnik's third holiday-season deployment and he tried to make himself feel more at home by sending out Christmas cards and shopping for presents online. Sachnik brought photos of his wife, two kids and his mother-in-law's chickens with him to Iraq. He included the chickens because his kids like to pet them and it reminds him of home.

He will get through the holidays by thinking not about what he's missing, but thinking about what he gets to do next year.

Staff Sgt. Charles Armstead does the same thing. He knows that home is something that's there, but being in Iraq, he can't touch it. It's hard, Armstead said, but he focuses on what he wants to do with his family when he gets back.

Home is represented by one thing for Staff Sgt. James Baxter. His wife recently e-mailed him a photo of his 2-year-old son, who fell asleep under the Christmas tree while waiting for Santa.

Soldiers and their families are used to change, but as any Texan – or Texan soldier for that matter – will tell you, Texas is more than just "home." It's a state of mind that can bring a bit of the Lone Star State anywhere, even if that anywhere is more than 7,000 miles away in Iraq.

That Texas bond helps create camaraderie during a deployment. When a soldier finds another Texan, it creates a certain kinship, Sachnik said.

"I'm always happy to meet another Texan," he said.

Coming from a state that has food in its shape and Texas ver-

sions of everything from beer to pickup trucks, finding pride isn't too hard for these soldiers. In fact, Baxter said that being a true Texan means having untiring pride.

Non-Texan soldiers will say something bad about the state and immediately three or four Lone Star soldiers will come to its defense, he said. If you're going to talk about Texas, be careful, Baxter warned.

"And make sure you're not standing near any true Texans because they will invite themselves into the conversation and you probably do not want to hear what they have to say," he said.

Texas has its Texans and Texans don't put up with anyone who messes with home, Sachnik.

Armstead is always in competition with his soldiers pretty much every day about whose home is the best, he said. It's not hard for him to prove his devotion to his state: he has a tattoo of his beloved Texas.

Baxter loves his state so much because of the variety. He was a recruiter on the Arkansas-Oklahoma border and, nicely put, didn't think there was a whole lot to do.

"Consider it a privilege to come to Texas," Baxter said.

Pfc. Tommy Johnson says people immediately know he's a Texan when they hear him talk. Baxter, Armstead and Sachnik all have a light, smooth Texas sound, but it's Johnson who's got the drawl the word "y'all" was made for.

Johnson gets a hard time "all the time" about his accent, he said.

Being a true Texan is all about pride and representation, the soldiers said. Johnson said he doesn't see the kind of pride Texans have in a lot of other states. Anyone can be a "regular Texan" as long as he or she has pride in the state, he said, but a "true Texan" must be born in Texas.

To Armstead, being a true Texan means to represent the state in every way possible, no matter if he is in Iraq or the Gulf Coast.



Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

1st Lt. Alphie Sachnik and Pfc. Tommy Johnson, 1-12 CAB, share memories of Texas and their families back home. "I'm always happy to meet another Texan," said Sachnik.

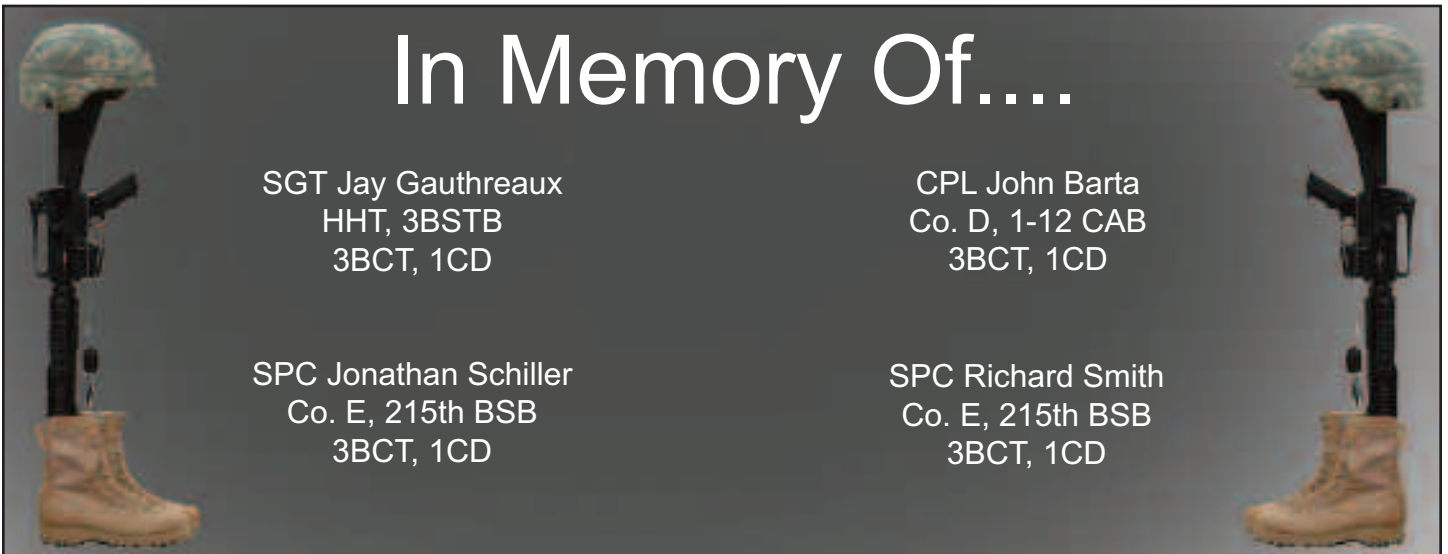
In Memory Of....

SGT Jay Gauthreaux
HHT, 3BSTB
3BCT, 1CD

CPL John Barta
Co. D, 1-12 CAB
3BCT, 1CD

SPC Jonathan Schiller
Co. E, 215th BSB
3BCT, 1CD

SPC Richard Smith
Co. E, 215th BSB
3BCT, 1CD



'First Team' Medics Train Iraqi Police

By Pfc. Ben Fox
3rd BCT Public Affairs

BAQUBAH, Iraq — The combat lifesaver course is a common course for Soldiers to take.

It is taught by combat medics and covers a wide array of simple, yet effective, techniques Soldiers can use to keep wounded warriors alive until further help arrives.

This same course was taught to Iraqi Police in Baqubah, Iraq, Nov. 28 and 30 by combat medics from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

"I've done CLS classes before, but this is a whole different ballgame," said Spc. Courtney Morris, Medical Company C, 215th Brigade Support Battalion, one of the medics who taught the class.

Back at Morris' home station, Fort Hood, Texas, she said teaching the class was easy since her students understood the language she was speaking and could relate to her culturally.

Here, Morris, a native of Phoenix, admitted the language and cultural barriers were hard to get past and prevented them from teaching the same way they do in garrison.

"Here we have to get a feel for each group," she said. "We have to adapt as we go."

To get through the barrier, Sgt. Darrell Crews, another medic who taught the class,

said he used visual aids and spoke through an interpreter.

"As long as they are willing to listen and understand, I am more than happy to be patient and work with them," said Crews, a native of St. Peters, Mo., adding that the group of IPs was attentive and quick to learn.

The medics taught the IP members several procedures such as how to treat head wounds, abdominal wounds, insert intravenous fluids, stop bleeding and clear airways.

Due to time constraints, the class had to be skimmed down to the bare basics, said Crews, but even with these basic skills, they will have greater ability to support themselves.

Crews and Morris often treat IPs at their aid station on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, said Crews, adding that many of them would be in better condition if they were treated with the basic skills they learned in the course before they came to the aid station.

Learning these techniques will help save more lives of the IPs who are often hit hard in Iraq, said Crews.

As combat medics, Morris said teaching the IPs these techniques is the most important mission they have.

"You can give a man a fish and feed him for a day, or you can teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime," Morris said, referring to the old saying.

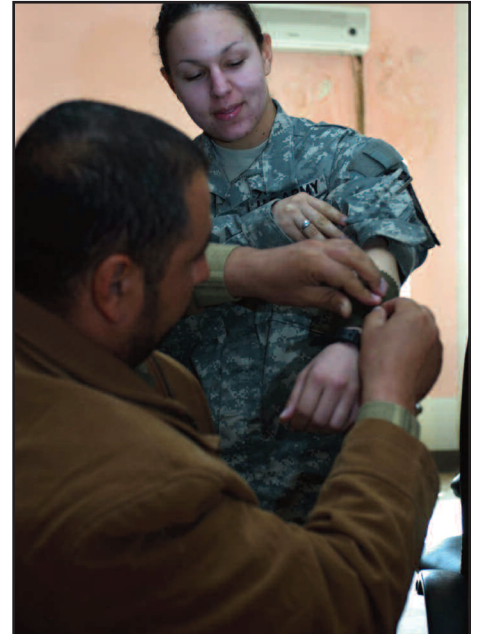


Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3BCT Public Affairs

During a combat lifesaver course for Iraqi Police, Spc. Courtney Morris, Medical Company C, 215th BSB, teaches Iraqi Policemen how to properly apply a bandage in Baqubah, Iraq.

Morris said teaching the Iraqi Police these skills is essential to helping them become self-sustaining.

"We want them to be able to take care of themselves when we aren't around," she said.

Santa Visits 'Blacksmith' Families

By Amanda Kim Stairrett
Killeen Daily Herald

Santa came in combat boots Saturday afternoon to the 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team's Christmas party at Clarke Elementary School on Fort Hood.

He was a popular celebrity, being mobbed as he stepped off of the Fort Hood Fire Department's truck and making his way to the crowd waiting for him curbside.

Battalion leaders wanted to mimic last year's Christmas party, which was a big hit, said Capt. Sancu Stone, battalion rear commander.

Each child got a wrapped

present from Santa's bag. And families could decorate cookies, make holiday crafts, take a whack at Christmas piñatas and eat food prepared by each company's Family Readiness Group.

Klara Searles and Hannah Taylor sat at the cookie table, taking the time to frost and decorate cookies as if they were works of art. Carefully concentrating, each applied a helping of frosting and blanket of candy sprinkles to complete their masterpieces.

The event was a chance for families to gather and have a little fun, Stone said. It was also a way to boost morale when heading into the holidays, because

the battalion is spending the season in Iraq having deployed two months ago.

Single soldiers from the battalion also came out to man the event and enjoy the festive mood.

Phyllis Kirklin, wife of battalion commander, Lt. Col. Ron Kirklin, said Saturday that she was happy to have the families at the party.

Staff Sgt. Denise Bullard, rear officer in charge for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, compared the event to a family reunion because of the closeness of units' families.

She said the event provided an outlet for kids to get together with others who are experienc-

ing the same things, like a parent's deployment.

The event was also a way to show families that the battalion cares about them. It gives them the feeling that, "When my soldier leaves, I will be taken care of," Bullard said.

And she knows how important that feeling is. Her husband, 1st Sgt. George Bullard of the 3rd Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, deployed several months ago.

Bullard's mother came to stay with her and the two attended the weekend Christmas party.

"It did my heart some good to see everyone here," Bullard said.

Radio Station Opens Doors, Provides Freedom of Speech

By Spc. Ryan Stroud
3rd BCT Public Affairs

BALAD RUZ, Iraq -- In a city where there is no means for releasing information to its people, coalition forces have developed a project to give the people the chance that many Americans take for granted – the privilege of free speech.

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the Al Noor radio station, also known as the “The Light,” located in Balad Ruz, Iraq, opened its doors to many with high hopes and happy faces from the Iraqi Army and police department, city officials of Balad Ruz and members of the 5-73 Cavalry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

“This is a great day for Balad Ruiz and its people,” said Mayor Mohamed Maroof Al-Hussein, mayor of Balad Ruiz. “I think this is a new stage for our city and a new way to serve our people.”

“This is a free station,” he continued. “The people can say what they want. The people can speak freely.”

With the help of 5-73, the civilians will now be able to here the news and get more information in their homes other than what the terrorist want to put out, said Al-Hussein.

“I remember the first night we were here [at Forward Operating Base Caldwell] and hearing Iranian broadcast in English to target the American Soldiers,” said Capt. John Pratt, Company B, 404th Civil Affairs. “These terrorists were getting their message out and the people here didn’t have a way to get their’s out.”

“This is a pro-government radio station that is to counter

act what the terrorists are saying,” said the Myrtle Beach, S.C. native. “It also lets the people know what the coalition forces are doing in their area to help them.”

Pfc. Timothy Bramhall, a member of 5-73, and said this mission was one of the most important missions he had been on. Not just for the coalition forces, but for the Iraqi people, said the Bronx, NY native.

“This is a chance for the city and its officials to reach out to their people,” Bramhall said. “It is also a chance for us to let them know we are here to help them and try to make Balad Ruz a better place.”

Balad Ruz, which is primarily farm land, is currently behind in technological progress. Pratt feels this is a big chance for the government to prove to its people that changes in the economy are just waiting to happen.

“This is a primarily agricultural community and this is proof that Balad Ruz’s new government, along with the progress that is being made in Iraq, that the city is able to take that first technological step to bettering their economy,” said Pratt. “This means more jobs and growth for the community.”

After the ceremony, spectators were given a tour of the



Photo by Spc Ryan Stroud, 3BCT Public Affairs

Members of the Iraqi Army and police department, Balad Ruz government officials and Soldiers from 5-73 Cav., join the Balad Ruz mayor, Mayor Mohamed Maroof Al-Hussein, in the ribbon cutting ceremony opening the doors to the Al Noor radio station, Dec. 18.

new facility and talked with the new employees. The station, which is now up and running, will start operations at 7 a.m. and end at 1 p.m., and will change its hours when employees are further trained.

Though the hopes of progress are high, Balad Ruz government officials and the coalition forces primarily hope the radio station raises awareness and the morale of the Iraqi people.

“I hope this new service will encourage other cities to start stations to better serve their people,” said Al-Hussein.

“I hope the [Iraqi citizens] feel good about this,” said Bramhall.

“I hope it gives them a chance to say what they want to say. I think its better for them to hear information from their own people then from us.”

“It’s also their people getting the chance to reflect their

own points of view,” he added.

“It’s a chance to let those out there know that they are not alone with their views. There are others also that feel the way they feel.”

Bramhall said he hoped the Iraqi people would understand this freedom to say what they feel.

“Something we, as Americans, forget about at times – our right to freedom of speech,” he said.

“They will now know what that’s like.”

“This radio station is for the people,” Pratt added. “It’s a way to put out information about what’s happening in their community to better serve the people.”

Employees of Al Noor are currently sending out flyers across the city to promote the station and begin its mission of informing the people.

What's in a name?**'Operation Etoile' Holds Special Meaning for 'Warhorse' Battalion**

By Capt. Gregory Stopyra
3-8 Combined Arms Battalion

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- When 3-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, was planning future missions to support the local Iraqis in their area of operation, one mission got special attention from the Soldiers of the "Warhorse" battalion, and received a special name.

The mission was to clear and level an area of ground often used by insurgents as a hiding area while they emplaced improvised explosive devices on a heavily traveled road a couple hundred meters west of Baqubah, in the Diyala province. These attacks would often put local nationals, Iraqi security and coalition forces at risk, and the Soldiers from the 3-8 CAB felt something had to be done to prevent these insurgent attacks.

With the help of the 92nd Engineers, from Company E, 3-8 CAB, Warhorse devised a plan to clear the ground in the area. The mission would involve leveling two large dirt mounds used to stage attacks, demolish an old tower used as a lookout, and clear back trees and brush often used for hiding. The engineers, also known as "Rough Riders," would then convert the resulting leveled ground into a soccer field for the children in the surrounding villages.

With the plan and operations underway, the only thing left was giving the mission a proper name.

In selecting a name for the mission, the leadership of Warhorse drew from an event that happened nine months earlier.

The Battalion had just completed their deployment preparation training at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, La. They loaded busses and began the long 11-hour journey home to Fort Hood, Texas. One bus, however, had its journey cut short due to maintenance issues. It just so happened that the bus broke down in the small Texas town of Etoile.

The town, with an official population of 70, quickly sprang to life to help the stranded Soldiers. The town converted a section of the local school into a make-shift lounge for the Soldiers, while many of the other troops took the opportunity to play games with

the children on their break from school. At a moments notice, the community voluntarily whipped up a magnificent spaghetti feast for the hungry Soldiers. This was their way of saying "thank you" and giving a little something back to the heroes who defend and serve their country.

The community's help was not forgotten.

The Warhorse leadership decided upon the name of Etoile for this operation. This French word for "star" now represents a tremendous success for the Warhorse Battalion.

The Rough Rider engineers used nine bulldozers to clear the ground and constructed a soccer field. Other Soldiers from the company met with families and children from a small village located just south of the construction project to hand out blankets, clothes, and toys.

Etoile, a name that represents a small town in Texas whose people reached out to help the Warhorse troops, is now shared with an operation that helped many small villages in Iraq.



Photo by 3-8 Combined Arms Battalion

During 'Operation Etoile,' a bulldozer from the Rough Rider Engineers clears the area to construct a soccer field for children in the Diyala province.

Photos From the FOB...



Submitted By Bill Roebuck, Proud Father of Spc. Christopher Roebuck, 3BSTB, 3BCT

While conducting combat patrols, a convoy from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, drives into the sunset in the Diyala province.

Got Photos?

If you'd like to see your photo in *The Grey Wolf Howl*, e-mail Sgt. Serena Hayden at serena.hayden@us.army.mil.